MOTION BY SUPERVISOR YVONNE BRATHWAITE BURKE   February 10, 2004

The number of Black families who own computers is rapidly increasing. So is the percentage of Black households with an Internet connection. But while the number looks optimistic – and they are – the issue of the Digital Divide remains a critical challenge for minorities when it comes to using technology in ways that truly matter.

As a nation, we must continue to narrow the gap in the level of computer skills, in the relevance of Web content, in the quality of Internet connections in poor communities, as well as the quality of technology-based education in disadvantaged schools. Most importantly, we need to make sure that technology – as well as every other tool at our disposal – is used to improve the quality of education in disadvantaged schools so that young people have the necessary academic skills to succeed.

When it comes to computers and the Internet, the real issue for the Black community is how to use it to become innovators and producers – to not only join the technology revolution but to figure prominently among its leaders and become role models for future generations. Measuring the Digital Divide is vital to a clear understanding of progress. By 2000 – the latest year with statistics provided by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration – 55% of White families owned a home computer and 50% used the Internet. By comparison 32.6% of Black households owned a home computer, with only 29% using the Internet. The gap in both continues to increase.

- MORE -

YBB:jar/black family technology awareness week 21004

MOTION

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THEREFORE, I MOVE THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:

Proclaim the week of **February 15 - 21, 2004** as **BLACK FAMILY TECHNOLOGY AWARENESS WEEK** and join with IBM, lead corporate sponsor of the Black Family Technology Awareness Week, in its plan to partner with schools, churches and community organizations nationwide to sponsor forums that demonstrate how technology is best used to improve the quality of life.

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